



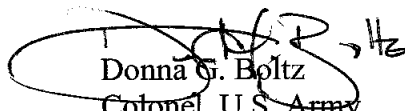
**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
UNITED STATES ARMY GARRISON, ALASKA**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**INSTALLATION FENCING, FORT RICHARDSON, ALASKA**

**May 2004**

APPROVED BY:

  
Donna G. Boltz  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Commanding


## **NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider potential environmental impacts prior to undertaking a course of action. Within the Department of the Army, NEPA is implemented through regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality [40 CFR Parts 1500 - 1517], with supplemental guidance provided by Army NEPA regulations [32 CFR Part 651]. In adherence with NEPA, Fort Richardson officials have prepared an Environmental Assessment to consider the environmental affects of a proposed installation fencing project.

### **ACTION: Installation Fencing, Fort Richardson, Alaska**

**ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS:** An EA and draft FNSI have been prepared, which provide a report of the analysis of potential environmental impacts represented by the proposed action (installation fencing at Fort Richardson). Copies of these documents are available upon request. Interested parties are invited to submit, in writing, any comments they have concerning the proposed action. Comments received will be reviewed and considered in the decision process. A public comment period begins on the first day upon publication of this notice in the local media and extends for 30 days. Copies of the EA and draft FNSI are available upon request or can be downloaded from the following location: <http://www.usarak.army.mil/conservation/>. For further information, please contact Major Dan Hunter, Fort Richardson Public Affairs Office, APVR-RPO, Fort Richardson, AK 99505-6500, (907) 384-3306; [robert.hunter@richardson.army.mil](mailto:robert.hunter@richardson.army.mil).

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:** An EA has been prepared to identify the extent of environmental impacts of the proposed action and to determine whether or not these impacts are significant. If the proposed action results in significant impacts, an EIS would be prepared to provide additional information on the context, duration, and intensity of the impacts. If the EA shows that the proposed action will not result in significant impacts, a FNSI would be prepared and NEPA compliance satisfied. An EA briefly provides sufficient evidence and analysis to enable a decision maker to determine whether a proposed action has the potential to significantly impact the environment. The FNSI documents the decision maker's conclusion that there is no potential for significant environmental impact, and that an EIS is not required for NEPA compliance. This decision is reached only after thorough review of the information provided in the Environmental Assessment and consideration of public comments.

  
Donna G. Boltz  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Commanding

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

### **Installation Fencing, Fort Richardson, Alaska**

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider potential environmental impacts prior to undertaking a course of action. Within the Department of the Army, NEPA is implemented through regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality [40 CFR Parts 1500 - 1517], with supplemental guidance provided by Army NEPA regulations [32 CFR Part 651]. In accordance with NEPA, U.S. Army Garrison, Alaska, has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider the environmental affects of a proposed installation-fencing project.

**Description of Action:** U.S. Army Garrison, Alaska (USAG-AK), proposes to install fencing along portions of the Fort Richardson military installation boundary and cantonment area. The proposed boundary fencing would delineate the Fort Richardson (FRA) boundary to alert the public that it is entering military training land; deter both vehicle and pedestrian trespass and reduce other illegal activities; reduce the cantonment area's vulnerability to unauthorized vehicular and pedestrian intrusion and protect resources necessary for National Defense; and would allow soldiers to train to standard safely and efficiently by reducing the number of military guards required to be posted along training area boundaries during training events.

The decision to be made is which one of four alternatives to implement: Alternative 1: No Action Alternative (Existing Fencing); Alternative 2: Pipe Rail and Full Cantonment Security Fencing; Alternative 3: High Security Fencing; or Alternative 4: Setback Fencing. Other alternatives were also considered but eliminated from detailed evaluation because the alternatives failed to satisfy the purpose and need or objectives for the proposed action, or were found infeasible.

**Procedure:** The analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with each of the alternative actions is set forth in *Environmental Assessment Installation Fencing, Fort Richardson, Alaska, May 2004*. The findings of this EA are incorporated into this final decision document. Potential issues were determined to be relevant if they fell within the scope of the proposed action, if they suggested different actions or mitigation, or if they influenced the decision on the proposed action. Early in the process, the public, state and local government agencies, and stakeholders were informed of the proposed action, and their comments were solicited. Solutions responsive to many of the public's concerns and questions were integrated into elements of the proposed action and alternatives. Relevant issues raised during the scoping process included the need for the Army to develop a clearer definition of the project's purpose and need, fence design and placement, impacts to recreational access, and impacts to wildlife movement, especially moose. Comments received from the public on the EA and draft Finding of No Significant Impact have been addressed and are available for public review.

**Discussion of Anticipated Environmental Effects of Installation Fencing, Fort Richardson, Alaska:** After careful consideration of potential environmental impact, community concerns and

FRA mission requirements, Alternative 2 (the preferred alternative) was found to offer the best course of action.

Under Alternative 2, construction of the fence will require vegetation removal within a 30-foot corridor along the Fort Richardson installation boundary. This action would affect approximately 78 acres, or about 0.13% of the total area of FRA. Where installed, the fence will abut the installation boundary line, except where a setback may be needed to accommodate terrain considerations.

Wetlands and streams bisect the FRA boundary at various locations. Because there is no practicable alternative that would serve project goals, some level of construction will occur within wetlands and floodplains. Practical mitigation measures will be employed in this project. These will serve to advert or reduce the potential harm to area wetlands and to ensure that the project does not adversely impact floodplains. The project will impact approximately six acres of wetlands. This represents less than 0.15% of the total wetlands on Fort Richardson. Surface soils would be slightly disturbed by construction equipment. Construction and soil erosion control techniques will be used to allow the soil to remain intact to encourage regrowth of vegetation during the subsequent growing season. The proposed fencing will terminate five feet outside of the high water mark of water bodies encountered by the proposed fencing. This will ensure stream flow is not impeded or channelized within the floodplain.

Pipe rail fencing will allow wildlife movements and migration to and from the Chugach Mountains to continue without interruption. The pipe rail design will allow for passage of large and small animals and continue to provide authorized recreational pedestrian access while reducing vehicular trespass. Currently, recreational users must call in to Range Control or the Provost Marshall Office on Fort Richardson to obtain information on range closures. Chain link fencing around the FRA cantonment area will be more restrictive to wildlife movement and recreational access than the pipe rail. In consultation with state wildlife officials, the chain link portion of the fence will be constructed with passageways for wildlife.

Following consultation with the Alaska Army National Guard, the design of the preferred alternative has been slightly modified. The originally proposed combination security fencing for the eastern boundary of Camp Denali will be topped with three strands of barbed wire, ensuring continuity with the rest of the security fencing around the FRA cantonment area. This slight alteration in project design is negligible from the perspective of the environmental analysis, and consequently does not change the conclusions reached in the EA or the determination of appropriate mitigation.

During construction of the fence there is a potential for discovery of contaminated soils or materials and, if found, such materials would be disposed of or remediated according to regulatory requirements. Potential negative impacts to air quality include small, temporary additions of carbon monoxide from construction activities. No historic properties would be affected by the proposed action or by any of the alternatives.

The aesthetic effect of the proposed new fencing would be more pronounced in areas where currently no fencing exists. The use of pipe rail fencing along those portions of FRA bordering

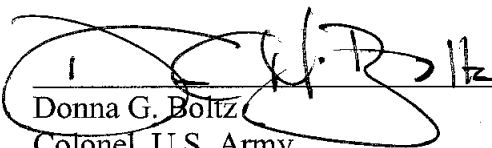
residential communities will serve to minimize the aesthetic effect. The fact that security fencing would reduce unauthorized access onto Army land will also benefit homeowners who may have experienced noise and other disturbance due to unauthorized activities on adjacent Army land.

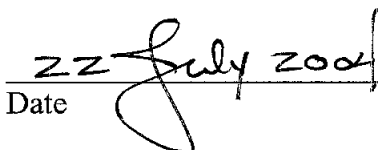
**Mitigation Measures:** To mitigate potential adverse impacts of the proposed action, mitigation measures that pertain to the selected alternative (Alternative 2) and listed in Section 2.3.5 of the *Environmental Assessment for Installation Fencing, Fort Richardson, Alaska*, will be undertaken as part of the proposed action.

**Conclusions:** In an attempt to balance the Army's training and readiness responsibilities and land stewardship obligations, USAG-AK has chosen Alternative 2, Pipe Rail and Full Cantonment Security Fencing, as its preferred alternative. Based on a review of the information contained in this EA, in combination with intended mitigation measures, USAG-AK determined that construction of the installation boundary fencing at Fort Richardson, as set forth in Alternative 2, is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. Accordingly, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for this proposed action is not required.

**Point of Contact.** Requests for further information should be directed to Major Dan Hunter, Fort Richardson Public Affairs Office, APVR-RPO, Fort Richardson, AK 99505-6500 (907) 384-3306; [robert.hunter@richardson.army.mil](mailto:robert.hunter@richardson.army.mil). The Environmental Assessment, Final Finding of No Significant Impact, and responses to public comments are available at <http://www.usarak.army.mil/conservation>.

**Approved by:**

  
Donna G. Boltz  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Commanding

  
Date 22 July 2004

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
Installation Fencing, Fort Richardson, Alaska**

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## **List of Common Abbreviations**

AR	Army Regulation
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CEMML	Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
USACHPPM	U.S. Army Center for Health, Promotion, and Preventative Medicine
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FNSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
HAPs	Hazardous Air Pollutants
INRMP	Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan
MWR	Morale Welfare and Recreation
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOA	Notice of Availability
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
ORRV	Off-road Recreational Vehicle
PMO	Provost Marshal Office
RAP	Recreational Access Permit
S&K	S&K Technology Inc.
TPY	tons per year
USAG-AK	U.S. Army Garrison, Alaska
USARAK	U.S. Army Alaska
USARTRAK	U.S. Army Recreation Tracking System